

REMARKS

In the June 16, 2005 Office Action, claim 14 was objected to and claims 14, 17, 20 and 47-49 stand rejected as failing to comply with the written description and enablement requirements. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the June 16, 2005 Office Action, Applicant has amended claims 14, 17, and 20, cancelled claims 47-49, and has added new claims 50-52 as indicated above. Thus, claims 14, 17, 20, and 50-52 are pending, with claims 14, 17, and 20 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of above amendments and the following comments.

Claim Numbering

In item 2 of the Office Action, it was stated that the May 17, 2005 Amendment failed to include claim numbers 21-29. Applicant regrets the error and has included all of the claims in the instant Amendment.

Election/Restrictions

In item 3 of the Office Action, Applicant's election Species I of Group II without traverse was acknowledged. In response to the election and Examiner's clear explanation in the June 16, 2005 Office Action, Applicant has deleted claims 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 30-46.

Claim Objection

In item 4 of the Office Action, claim 14 was objected to because it states that the word "a" should have been inserted prior to "second" in line 7. In response, Applicant has amended claim 14 as suggested. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

In item 6 of the Office Action, claims 14, 17, 20, and 47-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Further, in item 7 of the Office Action, claims 14, 17, 20, and 47-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.

The rejections were directed to amendments made to the claims in the May 17, 2005 Amendment. In response, Applicant has deleted the recitations added to the claims in the May 17, 2005 Amendment, rendering the rejections moot.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

In item 7 of the January 11, 2005 Office Action, claim 20 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,283,864 (Reik et al). In item 8 of the January 11, 2005 Office Action, claims 14, 17, and 20 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,715,922 (Imanaka). In response, Applicant has amended independent claims 14, 17, and 20 to define clearly the present invention over the prior art of record.

In particular, independent claim 14 has been amended to recite that the first frictional resistance generating portion has a portion that extends in an axial direction. Similarly, claim 17 has been amended to recite that the first friction generating portion has a portion that extends in an axial direction. Claim 20 has been amended to recite that the intermediate friction generating portion has a portion that is configured to extend in an axial direction.

In contrast, Reik et al. and Imanaka disclose first or intermediate frictional resistance generating portions that extend only in radial directions. Specifically, the January 11, 2005 Office Action identifies 39 as the intermediate friction generating portion as defined in

original claim 20. However, as seen in Figure 1 and column 8, lines 45-52 of Reik et al., the intermediate friction generating portion 39 thereof relies only on friction surfaces extending in the radial and circumferential directions. Further, the January 11, 2005 Office Action identifies 18c of Imanaka as the first or intermediate frictional resistance generating portion. However, as seen in Figure 2 of Imanaka, the first frictional resistance generating portion 18c extends in radial and circumferential directions.

Clearly, this structure is *not* disclosed or suggested by Reik et al., Imanaka, or any other prior art of record. It is well settled under U.S. patent law that for a reference to anticipate a claim, the reference must disclose each element of the claim within the reference. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 14, 17, and 20, as now amended, are not anticipated by the prior art of record. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

New Claims 50 - 52

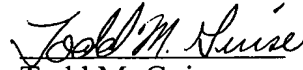
Applicant has added new claims 50-52. Claims 50-52 respectively depend on claims 14, 17, and 20. Thus, Applicant believes that the claims are allowable for the reasons mentioned above. Further, Applicant believes that claims are further allowable because they include additional limitations. Examination and consideration are respectfully requested.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 14, 17, 20, and 50-52 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,


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